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Letter dated 1 November 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a note by the Permanent Mission of Belarus to the United Nations concerning the results of the parliamentary elections and referendum in Belarus (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 105.

(*Signed*) Andrei **Dapkiunas**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 1 November 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Results of the parliamentary elections and referendum in Belarus: note by the Permanent Mission of Belarus to the United Nations

The elections to the House of Representatives of the National Assembly and the republic-wide referendum in Belarus demonstrated in convincing fashion the support of the Belarusian people for the policy of strengthening the sovereignty and independence of Belarus and further developing its democratic institutions.

The large number of international observers invited was a clear indication of the transparency of the electoral process in Belarus. The elections and referendum were monitored by a mission from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), representatives of other international organizations and independent observers. Despite an official invitation from the Belarusian side, the mission from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitored only the elections owing to a lack of resources.

A total of 689 foreign observers were accredited from 53 countries, including observers from international organizations. The broad powers granted to them and to the local observers, the creation of conditions necessary for them to observe all stages of the election campaign without hindrance and the expansion of the mandate of the international observers who had monitored the preparations for the parliamentary elections to monitoring of the conduct of the referendum all demonstrate the Belarusian side's desire to ensure that the will of the citizens of Belarus was expressed through an open process.

The interaction with the international observers took place in a spirit of complete openness and cooperation, which was noted in the reports of both the CIS mission and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of OSCE.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted with satisfaction, in its statement of 19 October 2004, the objectivity and balance of the conclusions and the positive evaluation of the results of the elections and referendum contained in the statements by the CIS observer mission and the independent observers.

The CIS observers noted that the republic-wide referendum had taken place against the background of an unprecedented campaign of external pressure. They regarded the unfairly harsh statements, biased comments and negative assessments made by various officials and entities of a number of European organizations and the United States of America concerning the referendum called in Belarus as attempts to create a negative attitude in the world community and among international observers towards the outcome of the referendum before it was even conducted. In the opinion of the CIS observers, such actions vis-à-vis a sovereign State and its citizens are fundamentally wrong and run counter to the norms of international law. It is the inalienable right of any State to hold a national referendum.

The CIS international observers made their assessments and reached their conclusions solely on the basis of their own observations and their analysis of the

factual information gathered by them in the course of long- and short-term monitoring.

The election of deputies to the House of Representatives of the Belarusian parliament and the republic-wide referendum, held on 17 October 2004, took place amidst great interest and activity on the part of the citizens of Belarus. They were conducted in accordance with the provisions of the electoral laws in force and were free, honourable, legitimate and transparent.